

California State Journal of Medicine.

Owned and Published Monthly by the

Medical Society of the State of California**PHILIP MILLS JONES, M. D., Secretary and Editor****PUBLICATION COMMITTEE.**Langley Porter, M.D.
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State Journal, . . .
Official Register, . . .Butler Building,
San Francisco.

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VOL. VI

NOV., 1908.

No. 11

EDITORIAL NOTES.

Most remarkable, in more ways than one or two, was the International Tuberculosis Congress held in Washington during the closing days of September and the early days of October. The daily press has had quite a little to say of it—particularly of those things which seemed to present some sensational features. But where is the publication that has uttered a single word concerning the most significant phase of the whole Congress? One of the very first speakers asserted, after due and careful study, that tuberculosis cost this country a billion dollars annually; that 138,000 persons died of this disease alone, each year. Now those 138,000 persons must have had some medical attendant and most of them must have paid no small sum to the medical profession during the course of the disease. Not a trifle, by any means. Furthermore, it is a matter of long observation that at least one person in ten has tuberculosis at some time in his life and probably that proportion of people, the world over, die of it. And yet, we see physicians from all parts of the world gather in Washington to the number of probably nearly 5,000 and there discuss enthusiastically the most recent discoveries and methods that will tend to stamp out the disease. The wonderful altruism of modern medicine passes recognition by the press. Can one imagine the Steel Trust devoting its energies to showing the people how to get along without steel? Can imag-

ination picture an aggregation of lawyers assembled to devise ways and methods by means of which litigation and the law's delays may be decreased? May one even picture an assemblage of clergymen perfecting a plan for universal salvation—without the necessity for supporting the churches? But the Tuberculosis Congress was the expression of the international effort of a single profession to cut off one-tenth of its income! In spite of which the people do not understand and are suspicious of our every effort. What is there about the medical profession that seems to put it so far beyond the understanding of the people that they will not see the truth? What is the matter with the editors of our lay publications, many of them men of remarkable intellect, that they fail to see the tremendous significance of such a gathering as the International Tuberculosis Congress? The assertion is made, apparently on good authority, that since 1880 the span of life has been increased six years. Has our profession, then, done nothing for humanity? And yet there are doubtless those who would say that the doctors keep 'em alive longer in order to treat 'em longer and so get more money! Ye Gods and little fishes!

At this time and distance it is not possible to review the very large amount of work accomplished at the Congress. Koch seems to have received a tremendous ovation, a reception only a trifle less marked having been extended to the other luminosities of the tuberculous heavens. Battle seems to have raged over the much-fought question of the identity or dissimilarity of human and bovine tuberculosis, with, apparently, the same old result—a difference of opinion. Great interest was evidently manifested in the newer diagnostic aids, the conjunctival and skin reactions, and doubtless in a short time we shall have items of great interest on these subjects presented for our consideration. The attendance was much larger than had been anticipated, some reports placing it at not less than 5,000. Our own State was well represented, some fifteen or twenty of our members having been present. One thing is certain; there is no more doubt as to the great interest in and value of these international congresses.

If one takes a dispassionate birdseye view of certain present conditions in American medical life, he will receive a distinct shock. Let us assume—and the assumption will be near enough the fact—that there are in the United States 125,000 physicians and 250 medical journals. All of these journals are, supposedly, published for the benefit and in the interest of physicians. Hovering hungrily on the flanks of this band of 125,000 physicians, ninety-nine and a fraction per cent of whom are in no sense of the word business men—rather the reverse—we may observe another band, not of the medical profession (except in rare instances) but

**IS IT
DOLLARS?**